OPEN Arms

*April 1999 * Vol 11 Number 4*

P.O. Box 845 Mishawaka, IN 46546

Gays say they seek 'equal rights'

Legislators are criticized for their handling of bills regarding adoption and hate crimes.

By Stephen Beaven Indianapolis Star/News INDIANAPOLIS (March 14, 1999) --

Gays, lesbians and their supporters met Saturday at the Statehouse to send a message. As disco music echoed through the rotunda, they rallied to let lawmakers know they're watching. "There are a lot of gays and lesbians," said Sarah Patterson, whose daughter is a lesbian. "All of the gays and lesbians have brothers and sisters and parents and aunts and uncles, and we all vote. The rally was sponsored by Justice Inc., a statewide civil rights organization focusing on gay, lesbian and HIV issues. Gov. Frank O'Bannon and other officials were invited, but none showed up. No matter, said Patterson and others. They came to let legislators know how they feel about several bills proposed this year. On Monday, the Indiana House defeated a hate-crimes bill that would have protected people based on their sexual orientation. And bills have been proposed in the House and the Senate that would ban gays and lesbians from adopting children. "Bills like the anti-gay adoption bills must be stopped," said Justice Inc. President Wally Paynter. "Bills like the hate-crimes bill must be passed." Paynter called the adoption bills "a waste of taxpayer money" and urged legislators to spend more time on issues important to all Hoosiers, such as education and taxes.

Some of the biggest cheers went to speaker Mary Byrne, of Women in the Arts. "I don't want any special rights," she said. "I just want equal rights. I want equal rights as a woman and equal rights as a lesbian. I think that's all anyone wants." If gays and lesbians don't have equal rights, she said, they shouldn't have to pay taxes.

Jayme Ambrose and Lisa Gravesen traveled from Logansport for the rally. They're trying to adopt their foster son. Legislators concerned about gays and lesbians adopting children can come visit their home, Ambrose said. "Family values run rampant through our house," she said. "If any of those legislators need to see family values, they're welcome to come and spend an evening at our house."

Youth Guard's Day of Silence.....Wednesday, April 7

The list of participating high school and universities grows every week. Organizers from hundreds of schools across the country are working fervently to confirm speakers, information tables, and support spaces to carry out the Day of Silence on April 7, 1999.

Youth organizing the Day of Silence will create a visible, "audible" silence to protest the oppression forced upon lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. Instead of speaking, participants will wear stickers and pass out cards calling for an end to the silence of LGBT people. Organizers will also offer educational tools and dialogue devoted to ending the silence by organizing post-event forums and breaks. Participation in the event has grown exponentially from a single campus in 1996 into an international effort in 1999. Every school will carry out the Day of Silence in a unique way.

At the University of Iowa, organizers have scheduled a shout-out in downtown Iowa City, where students will shout, bang pans, ring bells, and do whatever they can to make noise for an entire minute. The shout out will be followed by an open-mic session where people will be express to talk about their thoughts and experiences. According to Kit Murray, President of the University of Iowa Feminist Union, activities such as these will "give people the opportunity to continue to fight homophobia in their everyday lives and to have the resources available for people to educate themselves and others."

In Tulsa, OK, the events surrounding and supporting the Day of Silence span not a single day, but a week. High school organizers in the area are organizing around the theme "unity through diversity," holding panels on queers of color and biphobia. Tulsa organizer Emily Sisemore, a junior in high school and national high school coordinator of the Project, also plans to hold follow-up sessions to seriously address rifts in the LGBT community. Sisemore hopes the session will discuss "what can be done within our community to increase awareness and break down prejudice."

The Day of Silence has garnered the endorsements of national organizations such as Advocates for Youth, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Youth Guardian Services, And Justice for All, COLAGE, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Mel White, Founder of Soulforce, Inc., Student Environmental Action Coalition, and the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitian Community Churches. Local organizations endorsing and participating include Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth, the Bay Area Gay Straight Alliance Network, Queer and Active, and the SAFETeen Project.

If you or your school are interested in participating or learning more about the Project, please contact Jessie Gilliam, Co-Chair, at jmg8r@virginia.edu or Chloe Palenchar, Co-Chair, at cpalenchar@hotmail.com. Also, please refer to our homepage at http://www.youth-guard.org/dayofsilence for information on organizing the Project and a complete list of participating schools.

Day of Silence Project is a non-profit, youth-run organization that helps high schools and colleges in the United States and Canada to organize a Day of Silence at their school. Day of Silence Project aims to recognize and combat the silencing of the GLBT community throughout history and today.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

"SINGLED OUT", April 17, 6:00 P.M. We're going out for a great meal at Loco's Restaurant, 3801 W. Western Avenue, South Bend. Their specialty is Mexican food but they have other dinner entrees available and everything is GOOD!! Please call by April 17, so that we can reserve our tables....And remember, come one, come all. You can join this party- single or not!! For more information call Linda, 219-257-9082 or Lynn: 219-259-6801

Mountain Moving Coffeehouse: 1650 West Foster, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Andersonville, IL 773-973-9934

Saturday, April 10, 7:30 P.M. ..... Jamie Anderson singer/songwriter
Saturday, May 8, 7:30 P.M. ..... Cris Williamson & Tret Fure singers/songwriters
Saturday, June 5, 7:30 P.M. ..... Deidre McCalla singer/songwriter
Saturday, July 10, 7:30 P.M. ..... Alix Dobkin returns for her yearly July visit

April 8-11, Eureka Springs, Arkansas Diversity Celebration... More information at www.shimaka.com/eureka/diversity or e-mail: emrain@ipa.net or call Linda Williams 501-253-5445

Saturday, April 24....7PM to 11PM Evansville, IN TSA Youth Group has scheduled a FREE dinner dance for all gay, lesbian, bi, trans-sexual and questioning youth. For more information about this event, call 812-474-4873 or e-mail jgtch@psci.net

Saturday, April 24...8:30AM to 6:30PM P-Flag's Second Annual Indiana State Council Meeting at the Julia M. Carson Government Center, 300 East Fall Creek Parkway N. Drive, Indianapolis, IN Registration fee includes Continental breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Workshops and activities. For more info: 219-271-0102 or 219-277-2684

SILENT AUCTION and GODDESS ROCKS IX:
"The Carnival"
Saturday, April 3, 8:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M.

Where: Southwest Pavilion at the State Fair Grounds, Indianapolis, Indiana

Cost: $10.00 in advance, $12.00 at the door
More info: Women In the Arts, 317-927-9355

MUSIC AT THE ELECTRIC BREW

April 18....*Wishing Chair*, the delightful duo from Lexington, KY is returning for a 7 P.M. Sunday performance. There will be a $5.00 suggested donation

136 S. Main, Goshen, IN

DANCE, DANCE, DANCE
May 8, 1999

Lavender Rhythm presents a Spring Dance

9 p.m. to 1 a.m. (Michigan time)
8 p.m. to Midnight (Indiana time)
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Wimmin Only.....$7.00 at the door
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Music by DJ.....snacks provided

***Plan on attending this dance. Ask your friends to attend. Spread the word. These dances are a lot of fun!!! The wimmin who sponsor these dances will be unable to continue having them unless WE SHOW OUR SUPPORT!!

For more information: call 616-684-7362

On Sat. April 24, 7:30PM, Southside Christian Church will be hosting a Coffeehouse with entertainment by local pianist, Sherry K. Promoting her new CD **"Westbound,"** Sherry will be performing selections from the album as well as some old gospel favorites, a few jazz tunes, a classical number and even a sing-along or two! Come for a fun-filled evening of delicious libations, delectable baked goodies and incomparable ivory tickling as Sherry takes us through her enchanting journey that is **"Westbound."**

The church is located at 1329 E. Jackson Road and a free offering will be taken. This spectacular event is one that you will not want to miss!

NAME THAT DYKE!

by Lee Lynch

I intensely dislike my birth name. As a kid growing up in an apartment building my mother would lean out our window and sing this three-syllable name. The other kids took to chanting it in the kind of mean sing-song voices that torment children the world over. Of course, as a small person I didn't know this and took it personally. To this day the name grates on me like chalk on a blackboard.

Consequently, I had various nicknames as a kid ranging from Eeler to Grasshopper. Easy to deduce from these that I was a nervous child who seldom sat still and that I had tomboy tendencies, running and leaping being specialties of mine.

But the nickname that stuck, that was assigned to me at high school graduation by my girl, was Lee, a resoundingly proper traditionally lesbian moniker I've been proud to bear.

We all have our name stories. It amazes me how many people stay with their given names. Could they express who we are when often chosen prior to birth? Do we grow into names like Felicity and George? My mother thought the name she chose would grace a beauty contest winner. Instead my face, I'm assured, is fit to grace lesbian tomes. If a parent names a son Henry, is the infant expected to take on kingly trappings or be dubbed Hank and wield a baseball bat?? What of all the boy children named Dustin these days, is theater the expectation or a small Mrs. Doubtfire? Why in the world name a boy Gore if he's likely to become an intellectual not a warrior?

How did the name Jennifer become so popular? And Jason? Is there a parental underground that passes on these trendy noms du jour? A generation before me there was a lovely popular song called Laura. Ye gads! Lauras littered the playgrounds for decades! Thank goodness books aren't used much as a name resource or there would be Scarlett women everywhere and bashful embarrassed geeks named Rhett.

Men seem to savor their masculine identifiers. I've noticed that fully 65% of gay men are named Bruce, and that the other 35% are satisfied with variations on Robert: Bob, Rob, Bobby, Robbie, Roberto, Robin, Rupert, and Rab. Of course, these numbers do not include drag names which are among the most outrageous, narcissistic, radical and hysterical of all name changes. Holly Woodlawn, Divine and Candy Darling indeed!

But dykes! Old gay women seemed to love the name Leslie, femme or butch. Radclyffe Hall liked to be called John, as if her own name were not quite enough. More commonly a lesbian will be satisfied with derivatives. Gerry for the butchy Geraldine, Terri for the femme Theresa. Phil and Jo, Matty and Val are names that translate well into statements of independence from conventional femininity. Micky, Carrie, Vi, Lil and Ev wouldn't be caught dead (except at work or family-of-origin dinners) as Michelle, Carolyn, Vivian, Lillian and Evelyn. Then there are the last name takers: Kennedys who become Kennys, Murphys who turn to Murphs, a Claudia Jaurez who prefers to be called CJ.

Didn't most of us, gay or not at the time, try on different names in adolescence? Pamela Elizabeth Merrifields. Jock Stone. Grace Veil. Leonardo Van Gogh. I remember mine but would be mortified to share it. We all probably wrote it on notebooks and dreamed it on imaginary marquees. Some danced under that name, or astounded the world with our legal prowess. Others leapt higher than basketball hoops, ran more fleetly than Mercury, considered the name Babe Mercury. Ha! We thought no one would ever know!

What are we called today? I know a young woman struggling to transition from Andrea to Andy. Many watched the late and much loved proprietor of Mother Kali's Books decide in her seventies to return to her younger nickname Izzy. It fit. West coast women have a custom of choosing names from nature: Branch or Meadow, Cloud or Juniper. How very many old gay names could have been of this vein, but were not: Dusty, Sandy, Rusty, Dell, Rocky.

I am so lucky. Writers can name their characters. The more characters the more joy in finding them names. I remember coming up with Frenchy Tonneau on a bus ride home from work in New Haven. I worked with a very feminine young woman named Frenchie and the name caught my fancy. Yet when I named an earlier character, Annie Heaphy, I was taking revenge on a homophobic therapist by using his dog's name! An ex chose the torch singer name Tallulah Mimosa. Lover and I worked out the name Jasmine because the character's mom wanted a pretty daughter and I slapped on the last name of Jones because Jasmine had turned out plain. Can you tell this is one of the fun parts, for me, of being a writer?

The name may not make the woman or the man, but as any gay male or lesbian Tom, Dick or Harry will say, sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.

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WELLNESS CORNER

By Susan Myers, R.N., LCSW, HTP, Holistic Health Counselor

Ten Steps Toward Practical Wellness: Part 2

TEN ASPECTS OF WELLNESS.....Continued from last month

6. We are primarily responsible for our health. There are there risk factors of genetics, toxic environments and the like, but our emotional and lifestyle choices determine our health and well-being more than anything else. As much as we'd like to cling to blame and cop-outs, we do have to be honest with ourselves about our choices. The flip side is the empowerment that this realization gives us.

One path out of passivity and illness is to realize what you can do to boost your immune system. Stress and fatigue and poor diet have a tremendous influence on our body's ability to resist illness and disease. These are factors over which we do have control if we choose to utilize more adaptive health practices.

It is up to you to take charge of your own health and boost your immune system, follow the usual wellness advice and live a well-balanced healthy lifestyle but, more specifically, experiment with getting more rest, and practicing some established form of relaxation training on a regular and daily basis.

7. From increased self-sufficiency comes the confidence and power that overshadows fear. The Australian aboriginal people say that when a person cannot walk out onto the land and feed, clothe and shelter themselves adequately, a deep, primal fear grips their soul. Recognizing our interconnectedness, we grow tremendously when we can care for ourselves on many different levels. Skills, information and tools that enable us to: choose our food wisely (or even grow it ourselves); become more competent at our career; adjust the shifter on our bicycle; take a hike into a wilderness area; bake bread from scratch, etc., all increase our self-respect and self-confidence. We need to learn these skills and teach them to others, especially our children.

Identify some skill you want to learn that would make your life easier, more economical, fun, etc., if you possessed that skill (baking, something mechanical, an outdoors skill). Locate a person who you can learn that skill from and arrange an exchange of knowledge, skill, time, or some other way to barter a reciprocal arrangement you both like.

8. As much as we all need time with others, we all need time apart. Solo time, especially in the natural world, helps us relax, de-contract, and go beyond the distractions of modern life that prevent us from really knowing ourselves. There are some powerful reasons that peoples from all around the world have spent time alone (usually in a wilderness setting) in order to gain vision about the direction and meaning in their lives. Spend solo, quiet time in contemplation and awareness of everything around you and within your being. This is a time when you can connect to your higher presence, your internal guide.

9. You don't have to be perfect to be well. Extreme perfectionism is a shame- based process that feeds a really negative view of ourselves. Workaholism, anorexia, and other addictive behaviors can result. Wellness does not mean swearing off hot-fudge sundaes. It just means not "b.s.-ing" yourself about when you last had one! Whenever our "healthy habits" move from being positive addictions to being compulsive behavior is one way to distract yourself from some other issue that needs your attention

Get a gauge on your diet, exercise, etc. Read several sources and see what the experts recommend. Check your program out with a qualified local resource such as a nutritionist, exercise specialist, holistic health counselor, etc.

10. Play! We all need to lighten up and not take ourselves (and wellness) so seriously. Remember the lessons of the coyote and be playful, even ornery in a non-malicious way. Let the child within out to play. Give yourself permission to wear life like a loose garment.

The "work hard, play hard" philosophy does little to help us maintain the balance needed for a healthy life. Psychophysiology works twenty for hours a day, every day (not just on weekends). Integrate a healthy sense of humor and play into the workplace. Make sure your yang equals your yin.

List several of your favorite "play" activities, that you either do, or did at one time in your life. Now, note when you last engaged in each of these activities. Celebrate, or contemplate what you've (temporarily) let go of in your life. Have fun reclaiming your playful self.

Even with these suggestions, there is no concrete wellness formula that fits for everyone. You have to discover what works for you and them make a commitment to live your life differently, balancing all aspects of your body, mind and spirit.

COURT OF FRIENDS

Okay, all you singles! Looking for that special someone? Here is your opportunity to reach out to other singles. Write out what you want other singles to know about you and what you are seeking in another.
Open Arms will run your ad for 2-3 months. You can resubmit or cancel at any time.
Open Arms reserves the right to edit for length and/or content any letters submitted for publication.

Send your ad to: The Court of Friends, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, In. 46546 You will be assigned an ID number. Your letter and ID number will be published in the next issue. Those wishing to respond to a published single, may do so by enclosing their reply in a stamped, sealed envelope with the ID number written in PENCIL on the front of the envelope. Place your reply into another envelope and mail to the Court of Friends. Your reply will then be addressed to the corresponding single and mailed.

#81…….Hi,
I am a single woman looking for a single woman. I like to hang out at the Mall. I do a lot of walking and bike riding. I am looking for a good friendship.

#82…….42-year-old white female, non-smoker, passionate, warm, honest, responsible, caring, good listener, considered to be good looking and easy-going. ISO a kind, caring, honest feminine/soft butch woman in the Southwest Michigan area between the age of 41-50 to share new experiences and interests that are not limited to music, gardening, outdoor activities, short weekend trips, movies, dining, romance and intimate talks. Friendship and/or possible LTR.

A Third grade teacher collected well-known proverbs. She gave each child in her class the first half of a proverb, and had them come up with the rest. Their insight may surprise you.....

Better to be safe than.....Punch a 5th grader.
Strike while the.....Bug is close.
It's always darkest before.....Daylight savings time.
Never underestimate the power of.....Termites.
You can lead a horse to water but.....How?
Don't bite the hand that.....Looks dirty.
No news is.....Impossible.
A miss is as good as a .....Mr.
You can't teach an old dog new.....Math.
If you lie down with dogs, you'll.....
Stink in the morning.
Love all, trust.....Me.
The pen is mightier that the.....Pigs.
An idle mind is.....The best way to relax.
Where there's smoke there's.....Pollution.
Happy the bride who.....Gets all the presents.
A penny saved is.....Not much.
Two's company, three's.....The Musketeers.
Don't put off till tomorrow what.....You put on to go to bed.
Laugh and the whole world laughs with you, cry and.....You have to blow your nose
None are so blind as.....Helen Keller.
Children should be seen and not.....Spanked or grounded.
If at first you don't succeed.....Get new batteries.
You get out of something what you....See pictured on the box.
When the blind leadeth the blind.....Get out of the way.

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Justice, Inc. is looking for several volunteers to help with the work of the organization. Current volunteer opportunities include the positions of Treasurer, Speakers Bureau Chair, Lesbian Health Chair, Voters Registration Chair, Media Spokesperson, and volunteer coordinator. Justice is also seeking new board members who reside outside of the Marion County area.

If you are interested in serving in one of these positions, please call Justice President Wally Paynter at either 812-474-4873 or 317-634-9212, or e-mail him at volunteers@justiceinc.org, or fax him at 812-475-8811.

IN THE NEWS

March 9, 1999 JUSTICE LEGISLATIVE ALERT

HATE CRIMES UPDATE: On Monday, March 8, the hate crimes bill failed by a 44 - 49 vote. Only 2 republicans voted for the bill, and there were democrats who voted against the bill. A list of how your representative voted will be sent out later.

ANTI-GAY ADOPTION UPDATE: Senator Waterman will attempt to add anti-gay adoption language to the House bills that come over to the Senate.

ACTION: Write Senate President Pro Tem Bob Garton and thank him for his help in killing the anti-gay adoption bill. His address is State House, 200 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204. His e-mail address is S41@ ai.org

ACTION: Please write your own Senator, asking him or her to vote against any version of the anti-gay adoption bill. Address is above.....

NEED TO FIND OUT YOUR LEGISLATOR?: Call your local election board or check out the following web site: http://www.vote-smart.org/ce/s-districts/IN.html

ABOUT JUSTICE, INC.: Justice, Inc. is Indiana's statewide civil rights organization on gay, lesbian and HIV issues. Justice needs donations of both time and money to help us fight for our legislative issues. Justice, Inc. P. O. Box 2387 Indianapolis, IN 46206 (317) 634-9212 e-mail: info@justiceinc.org web site: www.justiceinc.org

****

A radical feminist professor at Boston College has been given an ultimatum from the school: admit men to her classes or stop teaching. Theologian Mary Daly lets only women take her courses. Daly, whose seven major books, including "Outercourse," have made her a pioneer in feminist circles, has said she won't back down...

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For more information, contact Justice at:
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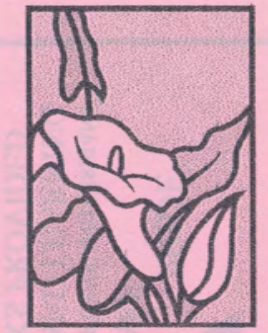

BIRTHDAYS

1, Barbara F.
2, Viki G.
10, Sherri H.
12, Sharon S., Colleen L.
19, Cheryl W.
20, Millie L.
21, Bridget K.
24, Lynn C.

SPRING INTO MUSIC…..

April 10, Jamie Anderson at the Mountain Moving Coffee-house

April 18, Wishing Chair returns to The Electric Brew in Goshen

April 24, Sherry K. will be performing selections from her new CD "Westbound" at Southside Christian Church, South Bend
More info on the community page

April 1999

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25	26	27	28	29	30	